PRESIDENT: Statements from the chair cannot be questioned. What was said was a definite statement from the chair announcing Government policy.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: Will the Government explain what they mean by the 'outlook' of the President of the State Congress?

PRESIDENT: Government, although they are not pledged, will say so. Certain individuals have been deliberately blackening the policy of the State and denigrating its work not only inside but outside the State and thereby bringing the prestige and reputation or attempting to bring the prestige and reputation of the State into disrepute. Prominent among those people—I do not wish to mention all of them,—are the present President and the present Secretary of the State Congress who are the worst among that group, and from that point of view and from their consistent propaganda designed to do discredit to this Government, this Government have definitely come to the conclusion that apart from all other things, as they are devotees of personal propaganda and personal vendettas, this Government will regard the organisations, so long as they are led by such people as subversive organisations.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: May I hasten to state that this statement is unacceptable?

PRESIDENT: No further questions will be allowed.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: Will the President explain the instances?

PRESIDENT: The honourable member has no right to proceed further on the matter.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: It seems to be the Government's ex-prate view of the Government.

PRESIDENT: It is the Government's definite view—ex-parte or in-parte. It is a matter for discussion outside the House.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: After having expressed our repudiation... ...

PRESIDENT: Honourable member is out of order and if he pursues in this track, I shall have to ask him to withdraw from the House.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: In view of the statement made by the Chief Secretary, may I ask the Government whether Dr. Moonje was here as a State guest and whether he expressed anything on Travancore political maters.

PRESIDENT: It is irrelevant.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: In the answer given by the Chief Secretary it was said that leaders were doing political propaganda. May I know whether Dr. Moonje has expressed himself on political questions?

PRESIDENT: I have already said that any statement on Political, Social and Economic matters might arise from the public. There is no objection to anybody who expresses his own views. I made that perfectly clear. It may be that views are expressed which Government may or may not share. For instance, Dr. Moonje has made his own statement. He is not considered a person coming within the ambit of my statement and therefore people like him can be allowed to go free. If, however, their statements fall within the ambit of

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[President.]

what I said, there will be no hesitation to proceed against them under the law. Honourable members will realise that this Government are not only willing but anxious to afford all necessary facilities for discussion and ventilation of public questions in the press and in the meetings and conferences convened by individuals or accredited organisations which follow policies and programmes designed in public interest, whether such policies and programmes are or are not in consonance with those pursued by Government.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: Do the Government accept the statement made by Dr. Moonje regarding responsible Government?

RAJYASEVAPRAVINA G. PARAMESWARAN PILLAI: It is irrelevant.

PRESIDENT: They will not.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: Will the Government repudiate the statement?

PRESIDENT: No.

MR. A. P. UDAYABHANU (*Karunagapalli cum Kartikapalli*): Is the advice regarding Hindu-Christian and Hindu-Muslim relationship consistent with the policy of Government?

MR. PULIYOOR T. P. VELAYUDHAN PILLAI: On a point of order.

PRESIDENT: It is quite open to put supplementary questions. I have already allowed them.

MR. K. K. CHELLAPPAN PILLAI: May I know whether the Government are aware that when the elections took place, Pattom Thanu Pillai was the President of the State Congress?

PRESIDENT: They are painfully aware of that.

MR. K. K. CHELLAPPAN PILLAI: As the Government now express that the activities were considered subversive, may I know why we were allowed to stand for elections?

PRESIDENT: Order, order. Speeches made by Pattom Thanu Pillai and others are being scrutinised by the law officers. After scrutiny, they will be proceeded against.

MR. K. K. CHELLAPPAN PILLAI: May I know whether it is not rather out of taste to allow us to go into this assembly and vesmirch our faces?

PRESIDENT: The State Congress is an organization bigger than any member of the organization; bigger than the President or the Secretary of the organization. The Government have absolutely nothing against the State Congress as such, or against the ideals of the State Congress as such. It is open to anybody in this State to pursue those ideals and pursue programmes in favour of those ideals. The question is whether a particular type of subversive activity is to be countenanced or not. The Government have absolutely nothing by way of objection to the propaganda of the State Congress as a Congress organisation. They are entitled to say for instance that the ideal of the responsible self-government for the State is necessary. They are not allowed to say for instance that the Maharaja should

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quit. There are limits within which this cry for responsible government can be rightly and legitimately put forward and advocated as vehemently as possible. In so far as the State Congress stands for those ideals Government have no reason to prevent the completest functioning of the State Congress.

MR. K. K. CHELLAPPAN PILLAI: May I know whether the Government can cite any instances of personal maligning?

PRESIDENT: Yes; certainly. A thousand instances.

MR. K. K. CHELLAPPAN PILLAI: Have the Government anything on record to that effect?

PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. K. K. CHELLAPPAN PILLAI: May I know from the honourable member what he means by 'antecedents of the State Congress'?

RAJYASEVAPRAVINA G. PARAMESWARAN PILLAI: They are well known.

MR. S. SANKARANARAYANAN TAMPI (*Karunagapalli* cum *Karthikapalli*): May I know whether Mr. Bhashyam's entry was prohibited simply because he came to Travancore to preside over a meeting of the State Congress?

RAJYASEVAPRAVINA G. PARAMESWARAN PILLAI: The answer is explicit.

MR. SANKARANARAYANAN TAMPI; The answer is not explicit.

Ex-President of the Mysore State Congress.

4. * **MR. K. K. CHELLAPPAN PILLAI:** Will the Government be pleased to state:

(*a*) why Mr. K. T. Bashyam, Ex-President of the Mysore State Congress was prohibited from entering the State recently;

(*b*) whether the Government has prohibited the publication of the copies of the speech he intended to deliver at the State Congress Conference at Palai, and if so, why?

RAJYASEVAPRAVINA G. PARAMESWARAN PILLAI: (*a*) The member is referred to the answer to question No. 3 [393].

(*b*) Government have not seen the copy of the speech he intended to deliver but a publication containing his message to the State Congress Conference at Palai has been proscribed as it was in the opinion of Government a prejudicial document under the Defence of Travancore Rules.

A. P. I. Message re: Mr. Pattom A. Thanu Pillai's speech at Bombay on 19th November 1944.

5. * **MR. K. A. MATHEW:** Will the Government be pleased to state:

(*a*) whether they are aware of the A. P. I. message from Trivandrum dated November 18th, 1944 published in the 'Indian Express' (Madras) containing particulars from 'official' sources and dealing with Mr. Pattom A. Thanu Pillai's speech made at Bombay on November 19, 1944; and

(*b*) whether such information was supplied with Government knowledge?

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RAJYASEVAPRAVINA G. PARAMESWARAN PILLAI: (a) The Government have seen the report dated 18th November published in the Indian Express of the 22nd November 1944.

(b) Yes.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: May I know whether the Government are aware that there are many misleading and incorrect statements in the report published?

RAJYASEVAPRAVINA G. PARAMESWARAN PILLAI: Yes, Sir, certainly.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: In that case, may I know from the Government whether the statement made in the report that the Government have consulted people in industrial concerns, is true?

RAJYASEVAPRAVINA G. PARAMESWARAN PILLAI: Certainly, Sir.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: May I know whether Government consulted the people regarding the starting of the newly-floated Steam Navigation Company.

RAJYASEVAPRAVINA G. PARAMESWARAN PILLAI: It has been mentioned before this House on a previous occasion.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: Have we been consulted on the other industrial concerns?

RAJYASEVAPRAVINA G. PARAMESWARAN PILLAI: The honourable member is referred to the previous proceedings of this House.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: May I know whether Government accept the official statement that the Food department was fully within the scope of the discussion of this House?

RAJYASEVAPRAVINA G. PARAMESWARAN PILLAI: Discussion on the Food department was fully within the scope of this House.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: Was it not a non-votable item during the last session? It is therefore a misleading statement.

RAJYASEVAPRAVINA G. PARAMESWARAN PILLAI: In the sense that the salaries of particular officers under Debt Head Advances they were non-votable. But everything else was open to discussion.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: Under that item were not all questions on food included?

RAJYASEVAPRAVINA G. PARAMESWARAN PILLAI: No.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: Was there any discussion in this House about food control?

RAJYASEVAPRAVINA G. PARAMESWARAN PILLAI: Yes, Sir.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: Will the Government enlighten us as to when?

RAJYASEVAPRAVINA G. PARAMESWARAN PILLAI: During the Budget Session.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: In the statement it was made out that there was no case of starvation in Shertallai. Do Government accept the statement?

RAJYASEVAPRAVINA G. PARAMESWARAN PILLAI: We can assert it.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: Then why did the Dewan, during his recent visit to Shertallai, promise Rs. 2500 to Relief Organisations for helping the people to buy rations at half rates?

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RAJYASEVAPRAVINA G. PARAMESWARAN PILLAI : That does not mean that there were deaths due to starvation.

MR. K. A. MATHEW : That shows the existence of poverty.

RAJYASEVAPRAVINA G. PARAMESWARAN PILLAI : That is an entirely different question.

PRESIDENT : Order, order. This is just the type of question that I was referring to. The honourable member has made the suggestion in this question that there were deaths due to starvation. The Dewan went to the place and asked various responsible organisations, the Ramakrishna Mission, the S. N. D. P., the Y. M. C. A., the Y. W. C. A., and various others whether they had come across any such incidents. They all said definitely—letters from them are in the Secretariat files—that there were no deaths by starvation although a certain number of people had found it difficult to buy rations at the price fixed for them. It was also pointed out that the labouring people were getting higher wages than at any time before, and that if anybody suffered, it was those with fixed incomes, like the lower paid Government servants. Therefore, in order to relieve the stress, a promise was made to pay Rs. 500 a month to the various organisations. It is significant that not one of these organisations has drawn that sum of Rs. 500 per month. The amount is available to these organisations for the relief of distress, but neither the S. N. D. P., nor the other organisations like the Ramakrishna Mission, or the Y. M. C. A., has drawn it. Until the 16th January 1945 no action was taken by the organisations concerned regarding the subsidy made on the 21st November 1944. Government therefore again addressed these organisations requesting them to state whether they have not gone into the matter. The reply from the S. N. D. P. has been verified by the local Tahsildar. He has eliminated 146 units from the list submitted by the S. N. D. P. and selected 156 units. The Vanchi Poor Fund at Alleppey said they were taking statistics in the matter. They submitted a list on 14-2-1945, the Ramakrishna Mission on 30-1-1945. But in spite of these, many people are deliberately going about saying here and out in Bombay, Delhi and other places that there were many deaths due to starvation. I made it clear that certain persons were collecting subscriptions although this Government wanted no subscriptions to be collected. Subscriptions are still being collected and I make the definite charge that these subscriptions have not been properly accounted for by the people who collect them, including the members of the Servants of India Society. I understand that one or two members of the Servants of India Society went to the place, took photographs of two or three children and purported to send those photographs to America, to England, and to Northern India for the purpose of showing how badly the food situation has been handled here. All that I can say is that, all over India, notwithstanding the efforts made by that minority, it is granted that perhaps the food administration in Cochin and Travancore has been the best conducted in India. Nevertheless, there is persistent propaganda, both by questions here and newspaper statements outside the State, that there is considerable amount of starvation, and deaths due to want of food. That is the particular kind of vendetta that I have designated as both unpatriotic

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